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Approved For Release 2005/04/13 : CIA-RDP79R01099A001500150002-4

THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20505

SP - 138/74
25 September 1974

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MEMORANDUM FOR:

[REDACTED]
Acting Deputy Director for Estimates
Defense Intelligence Agency

SUBJECT: The Soviet Image of the United States

1. This note is a reply to your memorandum of 14 September 1974 commenting on the report, "The Soviet Image of the United States." We appreciate both your interest in the report and your comments on it.

2. In general, we agree with your conclusions that the views of the Soviet leaders about the relative strategic posture of the US and the USSR--and their image of the US--are probably not sharply polarized. We did not assert in the report that this was the case. However, as regards perceptions of the strategic nuclear balance, you would probably agree that the many shadings of Soviet views of the power relationship between the US and the USSR could be divided into two broad categories: those which envision the Soviets as behind the US in certain capabilities and those which see current Soviet forces and ongoing programs as providing rough overall equality. Different sets of Soviet policies would flow from a consensus that some imbalances had to be redressed than from one which saw the two sides as roughly equal. It was our purpose to surface this central question which might be on the President's mind as he approached the SALT problem. In writing a short general treatise on the Soviet image of the US in all the major fields of power relationships and competition, we did not feel it necessary to explore the multiplicity of views about military, economic or other aspects of the power relationship. Rather, we tried to describe what we believed were the central or most persistent Soviet images of the United States.

3. Your concerns about how we judge Soviet perceptions of the US military-strategic posture are understandable; an appreciation of these perceptions is obviously important to US defense planning and to our positions for SALT. We do intend to treat the subject in NIE 11-3/8-74, bringing to bear the judgments of all agencies of the Intelligence Community. In fact, the first chapter of that estimate is titled, "Soviet Perception of the Strategic Environment." For this reason, we

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do not believe a separate interagency study on Soviet views on the strategic balance is necessary at this time, since in many cases it would entail the same people doing essentially the same work twice.

4. The NIO for Strategic Programs, in collaboration with DIA and other agency representatives, plans to shape an interagency production program for the remainder of FY 1975 directed at the most important unresolved issues in NIE 11-3/8-74. An interagency study on Soviet views of the strategic balance or perhaps a paper of broader scope on Soviet strategic objectives may well evolve from the post-mortem on NIE 11-3/8.

George A. Carver, Jr.
Deputy for National Intelligence Officers

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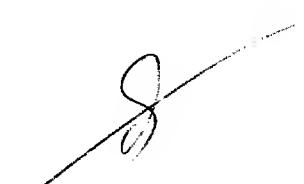
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NIO/SP [REDACTED] (23 Sept 74)

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